



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

2800 BERLIN TURNPIKE, P.O. BOX 317546  
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06131-7546



Office of the  
Commissioner

An Equal Opportunity Employer

**Public Hearing – February 4, 2013**  
**Transportation Committee**

**Testimony Submitted by Commissioner James P. Redeker**  
**Department of Transportation**

**Proposed H.B. No. 5451 - An Act Concerning the Maximum Speed Limit on State Highways, Reckless Driving and Fines for Speeding and Reckless Driving.**

**Proposed H.B. 5553 – An Act Increasing the Maximum Speed Limit and Increasing Fines for Speeding.**

The Department of Transportation (ConnDOT), Office of State Traffic Administration (OSTA) is opposed to raising the maximum speed limit on multiple lane, limited access highways to 75 miles per hour (MPH) at this time.

CGS 14-281a, Speed of School Buses, states “the maximum speed shall not exceed fifty miles per hour on divided limited access highways and forty miles per hour on all other highways or, where highways signs indicate lower speeds, shall not exceed such posted speed limits.” In addition, CGS 14-220 requires that “No person shall operate a motor vehicle at a speed lower than forty miles per hour on any limited access divided highway...” Allowing vehicles traveling at such differences in speed can create a speed differential that impedes the normal and reasonable movement of traffic and contributes to sudden unnecessary lane changing.

Should these issues be overcome, ConnDOT would not be opposed to raising the maximum speed limit on *rural* multiple lane, limited access, divided highways only, provided that the speed limit be established based on an engineering investigation.

**Background:** On November 29, 1995, Congress appealed the national maximum speed limit granting States the full authority to establish speed limits on all roads. In Connecticut, the Office of the State Traffic Administration sets regulatory speed limits on all public roads based on an engineering investigation. Principal factors considered are: land-use (rural/urban); population; traffic volumes; design speeds; road geometry; spacing of intersections and/or interchanges; road type and surface; location and type and number of access points; existing traffic control devices; accident history; sight distance; test drive results and radar speed observations.

Speed limits in Connecticut are normally 65 MPH on rural freeways and up to 55 MPH on rural divided and undivided roadways. In urban areas, speed limits normally vary from 25 MPH on residential streets and central business districts to 45 to 55 MPH on freeways. Rural and urban limited access divided highways have a minimum speed limit of 40 MPH.

Prior to 1974, the maximum speed was 70 MPH on Connecticut’s rural freeways.

For further information or questions, please contact Pam Sucato, Legislative Program Manager for the Department of Transportation, at (860) 594-3013.